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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MADRAS CONFERENCE FOR THE INNER LIFE OF THE CHURCH IN CHINA

A Thesis

submitted in candidacy for the degree of

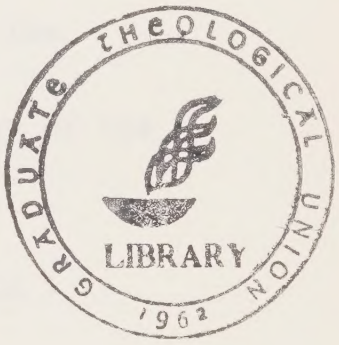
Master of Theology

in the

Berkeley Baptist Divinity School

by

Marion Olin Burkholder



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OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

Page

Bibliography v

Introduction 1

Chapter I 4

THE MADRAS CONFERENCE

A. Historical Background.

1. Madras a Lineal Successor of Edinburgh and Jerusalem.

2. Planning by International Missionary Council.

3. Areas of Church Life Considered.

B. Outstanding Features of the Conference.

1. Ecumenicity of the Conference.

2. Participation of the Younger Churches.

3. Strength of Chinese Delegation.

C. Value and Continuing Significance.

1. Personal Value to Members of the Conference.

2. New Recognition of Basic Unity of the Church.

3. Observable Weaknesses.

4. Abiding Significance for World Christianity.

Chapter II 17

RELEVANT FEATURES OF THE CHINESE CHURCH IN THE PAST

A. Factors Retarding Growth of the Church.

1. Conservatism of Chinese People.

2. Atmosphere of Heathenism.

3. Persecution of Christians.

B. Concern for Spiritual Life by Early Leaders.

C. Type of Christians Developed.

1. Martyrs of the Boxer Rebellion.

2. Strength of Chinese Christian Leaders.

Chapter III 26

ESSENTIAL FACTORS FOR STRENGTHENING THE INNER LIFE

A. Worship.

1. Nature of Christian Worship.

2. Importance of Worship.

3. Making Worship Increasingly Meaningful.

B. The Christian Home.

1. Importance of the Home in Chinese Society.

2. Meaning of a Christian Home.

3. The Christian Home and Development of Spiritual Life.

4. Helps in Making the Home Christian.

C. Religious Education.

1. What Constitutes Religious Education ?

2. Religious Education in the Home, School, and Church.

D. Christian Literature.

1. Place of Literature in China.

2. Christian Literature and the Devotional Life.

3. An Adequate Program for Christian Literature

Chapter IV 48

THE CHURCH'S INNER LIFE AND EVANGELISM

A. The Meaning and Message of Evangelism.

1. What is Evangelism ?

2. The Message of Evangelism.

B. Correlation of Evangelism and the Inner Life.

1. Evangelism Necessary for Spiritual Growth.

2. Success in Evangelism Dependent on Inner Life.

Chapter V 59

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND THE INNER LIFE OF THE CHURCH

A. Pressing Problems of China's Economic Environment.

1. Tenancy.

2. Debt.

3. Illiteracy.

4. Ill-health.

B. Relationship of Economic Environment to the Church's Inner Life.

1. Conversion and the Economic Environment.

2. Economic Conditions Affect Church Life.

C. Financial Support of the Church.

1. Necessity of Spiritual Foundations.

2. Methods of Increasing Church Support.

Chapter VI 71

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY TO THE CHURCH'S SPIRITUAL LIFE

A. Need for the Missionary's Contribution.

1. Strengthening Church Life.

2. Post-war needs.

B. Contribution of the Missionary.

1. Witness of Christian Truth.

2. Friendly Co-worker in Chinese Church.

C. Qualifications Necessary for Making Adequate Spiritual Contribution.

1. Rich Personal Religious Experience.

2. Firm Grasp of Christian Fundamentals.

3. Humility and a Willingness to Learn.

Conclusion 83

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INTRODUCTION

The Protestant Christian missionary enterprise has been operating in China for almost one hundred fifty years. During that period of time thousands of missionaries have served and millions of dollars have been spent in the task of establishing Christianity in the land. The results attained have justified all the efforts put into the enterprise. However, the success achieved has not come easily. Christian forces have faced handicaps and problems of many kinds.

In recent years, military conflicts, a rising tide of nationalism, and the rapid growth of secularism have been serious obstacles to the growth and development of the Church in China. In many cases these difficulties have hindered the strengthening of the inner life of the Church. Christian leaders have felt the need of help in overcoming their problems. In 1938 a world missionary conference was held in Madras, India. Vital matters facing the Church throughout the world were discussed and helpful suggestions for improvement were made. The Conference was of no little significance for Christianity in China.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the most essential findings of the Madras meeting that have a particular relationship to the inner life of the Church in China. The Conference considered many phases of church life, but none were more significant than those having to do with the spiritual life of the Church.

The subject of the thesis is important for several

reasons. In the first place, it is valuable because of the significance of the Madras meeting itself. The Conference was composed of leading Christians from all parts of the world. They met for a serious purpose, and gave their best thought and talents to problems facing Christianity in a critical period of the world's history. The pronouncements of this body can be taken as helpful guides for the work of the Church in all lands, and especially in those of the younger churches. Again, our investigation is important because it deals with the Church in the ancient land of China. More and more China is being recognized as one of the truly great nations of the world. Before the terrible war broke out with Japan in 1937, China was making rapid progress in many lines. Although small in numbers, the Christian Church was a strong influence in this development, and even through the years of the war it has been an inspiration and guide to multitudes. There is promise that it will be an even greater constructive force in the future. The study is vital in the third place because it has to do particularly with the inner life of the Church in China. The spiritual vitality of any church is extremely important. When spiritual life is at a low ebb, the witness of the Church is correspondingly weak and progress in all lines is hindered. Hence, any help which may be found for strengthening the Church's inner life should be welcomed by all Christian leaders. The Madras Conference was especially significant in this regard, so its findings provide the basis for a worthwhile study.

1 John R. Mott, "At Edinburgh, Jerusalem and Madras," The International Review of Missions, July, 1938, p. 297.

2 Ibid., p. 298.

CHAPTER I

THE MADRAS CONFERENCE

Historical Background

The World Missionary Conference held in the Madras Christian College at Tambaram, India, December 12th to 29th, 1938 was a valuable and significant meeting. In many respects it was one of the most important gatherings in the history of the world mission of Christianity. Its message and results have had a far reaching influence. For a full understanding of the Conference, a knowledge of its background and preparations is important, so our attention is turned to these features first.

In June, 1910, a world missionary conference was held at Edinburgh, Scotland. It was said that this Conference "marked a stage of major significance in the life of modern missions."[1] International missionary conferences had been held in others years, but they did not come up to Edinburgh in scope and achievement. There were 1355 delegates at Edinburgh; provision was made also for visitors so that at times several thousand persons were in attendance at the public sessions. "Thus the Conference at Edinburgh represented the high-water mark of popular missionary interest and enthusiasm. As a great religious demonstration of the world mission, it still stands in a class by itself."[2] The years immediately following this Conference saw a great outpouring of life and

3 Ibid., p. 303.

4 Jesse R. Wilson, "The Christian World Came to Madras", Missions, March, 1939, p. 142.

funds for missionary expansion.

Growing out of the Edinburgh Conference was the formation of the International Missionary Council, which in the years since has come to have widespread influence in the field of world Christianity. It was the Council that carried out plans for another great missionary meeting. This was the Jerusalem Conference held on the Mount of Olives from March 24th to April 8th, 1928. The Jerusalem Conference had only 250 delegates in comparison with the much larger number at Edinburgh.[3] However, the work and pronouncements of Jerusalem were of vital importance. One writer stated that "It reaffirmed the great truths of the Christian faith and the essentially missionary character of that faith. It set forth the spirit that should control all missionary effort. Above all, it gave encouragement to the struggling, younger churches and kept some of the missionary agencies of the older churches from utterly disintegrating."[4] The Madras Conference was the next in line of the international missionary conferences, and we turn now to a more detailed study of it.

The decade following the Jerusalem Conference was a time of confusion and difficulty in many parts of the world. Years of depression and recession brought uncertainity and bewilderment to many people. The effects of this condition were felt especially in the Christian missionary movement. Giving for missions fell off in a marked degree, and many of the younger churches were affected adversely. Christian

5 Mott, Op. Cit., p. 311.

leaders in both East and West recognized these conditions and did their best to cope with them successfully.

One body which became especially cognizant of world conditions was the Ad Interim Committee of the International Missionary Council. At its meeting in Salisbury, England, in July 1934, the Committee "decided that the time for another world missionary gathering was near at hand, and authorized a world-wide enquiry to ascertain the sentiment of the various bodies concerned."[5] When the responses to this enquiry had been received, the Committee of the Council held a meeting at Northfield, Massachusetts, in the fall of 1935. After full consideration of the proposition, it was unanimously agreed to hold a world missionary conference in 1938. According to the first plans, the Conference was to be held at Hangchow, China, but with the outbreak of war between China and Japan in 1937 a change became necessary. Thereupon decision was made to hold the proposed general Council meeting at the Madras Christian College in Tambaram, a suburb of Madras, India.

Between the time of the preliminary planning and the actual holding of the Conference, the officers and Ad Interim Committee of the International Missionary Council did a tremendous amount of work. They engineered the plans and details that were necessary for such an undertaking. Working with members of the Council was a large number of Church leaders who made wide studies and wrote papers for consideration at the Conference. Mr. J. Merle Davis, director of the Council's

6 Wilson, Op. Cit., p. 144.

7 Loc. Cit.

Department of Social and Industrial Research and Counsel, produced a valuable series of reports on the economic basis of the Church, problems of church finance and kindred topics. Dr. R. A. Felton, professor at Drew Theological Seminary, made an extended study of the Rural Church in the Far East. Dr. Hendrik Kraemer's volume, The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World, was written especially for the Madras Conference and was widely discussed there.

The program at Madras was comprehensive, and covered many factors of vital concern to the Christian Church, but five special areas of life and thought were given consideration. These were:

1. The Faith by Which the Church Lives.
2. The Witness of the Church.
3. The Life of the Church.
4. The Church and Its Environment.
5. Cooperation and Unity.[6]

These major divisions were broken down into sixteen sub-topics, each one of which was considered in detail by a separate section of the Conference. Each section had approximately thirty members, and each delegate took part in the work of two sections. Besides these regular topics and divisions a number of special groups were set up to study more specific areas and problems.[7]

Outstanding Features of the Conference

Several characteristics give the Madras meeting outstanding significance and importance for the life of world Christianity today. We mention three of these.

8 K. S. Latourette, "Impressions of Madras", The Missionary Review of the World, March, 1939, p. 115.

9 Jesse R. Wilson, "The Christian World Came to Madras", Missions, March, 1939, p. 141.

10 William Paton, "The Meeting of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram, Madras", The International Review of Missions, April, 1939, p. 162.

11 Georgia Harkness, "The Madras Conference and Church Unity", World Outlook, May 1939, p.13.

In giving some of his impressions of Madras, Professor Kenneth Latourette of Yale made a significant observation when he stated, "First of all, the gathering was more widely representative--more ecumenical--than any which Protestant Christianity has ever seen."[8] A study of the Conference statistics gives vivid evidence of this outstanding feature. The total registration was 471. Of this number 377 were duly elected voting members. The 94 non-voting members "included 39 co-opted delegates, 7 fraternal delegates, 13 students, 5 editors, 8 officers, 14 on the business staff, and 15 stewards (Indian students)."[9] Though there was some difference of opinion as to units to be counted, Dr. William Paton, Secretary of the Council, stated that 69 global areas were represented.[10] Furthermore, "there were representatives present from almost every racial group except the American Indians."[11]

This great host of people from so many different areas of the globe and so many varying cultural backgrounds met on an equal basis and all were regarded as one in Christ. This fact in itself is of tremendous significance because it points the way to true world Christian brotherhood. It shows that there is a solution to the racial hates and antipathies that exist in so many parts of the world. Also it gives concrete evidence of the enlarging importance and place that the ecumenical movement is having in Protestant Christianity.

Various members of the Madras Conference were impressed

12 Ibid., p. 12.

13 Loc. Cit.

14 Latourette, Op. Cit., p. 115.

15 Paton, Op. Cit., p. 162.

by different features of it, but in the minds of all certain facts came to the fore. One of these was the position and importance of delegates from the younger churches. A certain leader stated that, "The outstanding feature of the Madras Conference, which makes it different from any previous world gathering, was the participation of delegates from the younger churches in parity of numbers and equality of status."[12] Language was a problem for some members from the younger churches. English was the official tongue for the public meetings, and of course that was not the native language of the majority. But as Georgia Harkness writes, "in spite of the language handicap, the representatives of the younger churches made their contributions with pose and clarity, without apology or bombast, and withal, with power."[13]

This matter of the participation of the younger churches in the work of Madras is of further significance because it "gave vivid evidence that the younger churches are coming of age."[14] Of the 377 voting members previously mentioned, 191 were nationals from the younger churches and 186 were from what we know as the older or sending countries.[15] This is in sharp contrast to the Edinburgh and Jerusalem Conferences. At Edinburgh in 1910 less than a score, or approximately one per cent, of the delegates were from the younger churches. The Jerusalem Conference in 1928 included a larger percentage, though only one in four. Moreover, these delegates did not come into prominence to the extent

they did at Madras, where they constituted a majority, and provided the chairmen for several groups.

This position that delegates from the younger churches held in the Conference is of no little importance. For one thing, it indicates something of the strength of the Christian movement in the world today. Again, it shows that with all the failures and faults in the management of the Christian missionary enterprise during the past century, very substantial progress has been made along many lines, particularly in the development of Christian leaders. Furthermore, the quality and character of these leaders gives increased basis for high hopes in the success of the ever expanding work of the Christian Church in lands that are still called non-Christian.

This thesis is primarily concerned with the Madras Conference as it relates to an important phase of the life of the Church in China, hence it is not out of place in this part of the background discussion to note a few features of the Chinese delegation at the Conference. As has been stated in the forepart of this chapter, the International Missionary Council had first planned to hold the Conference of 1938 in Hangchow, China. The continued extension of the war with Japan, however, made that original plan impossible of fulfillment. That did not dampen the enthusiasm of the Chinese delegates nor cause them to change their plans for attending the meeting. An example of this attitude may be seen in

16 Lin Pu-Chi, "Madras in the Light of History", The Chinese Recorder, November 1938, p. 545.

17 Latourette, Op. Cit., p. 115.

18 Anna Canada Swain, "Women at Madras", Missions, May 1939, p. 292.

what one Chinese leader wrote: "As to the Chinese Church, in spite of the present troubled conditions, in which the nation is engaged in a life and death struggle, she is still sending some sixty delegates, with the Chinese representation much stronger than at the previous Jerusalem Conference, indicative of the life of the church being on the march, and having ascendancy over things material."[16]

This strength of spirit was recognized when the Chinese delegation came into action at Madras. Dr. Latourette noted that "The Chinese delegation was especially strong."[17] Another American delegate stated, "There seemed to be general agreement that China had the outstanding delegation at the Conference. It was headed by President Yi-fang Wu, popular president of Ginling College."[18] These estimations of the Chinese delegation are of value to our study because they indicate something of the strength and importance of the Christian Church in China and of the vitality of its inner life.

Value and Continuing Significance

In the preceding paragraphs some reference has been made to the importance and significance of the Madras Conference. It is our purpose now, however, to consider this question more specifically as noted in the outline.

One of the values that comes out of a meeting such as that at Madras is the effect it has on those who

19 Paton, Op. Cit., p. 173.

20 Wilson, Op. Cit., p. 149.

participate in the gathering. The members of the Tambaram meeting were especially fortunate in the personal benefits that came to them. William Paton went so far as to state that "Perhaps among all the consequences of this historic gathering the greatest will be the effect upon the delegates who came from relatively backward Churches, and met at Tambaram not only the representatives of the church life of America, the continent of Europe and Britain, but the leadership of the maturer Churches of the East and of Africa."[19]

One value that came to many members of the Conference was a deepening of faith in the reality of the Christian Gospel and the adequacy of Christ to meet fundamental human needs. Some of the delegates came from thoroughly non-Christian backgrounds, yet they had been transformed by the power of Christ and were living witnesses of His abundant grace. Jesse R. Wilson, Secretary of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, made a pertinent statement in this regard. In reporting the Tambaram meeting he wrote: "No group of men in all the world, as widely divergent as was this Conference in race, nationality, and cultural heritage, could have dealt with such issues as were dealt with here and could have remained from beginning to end in unbroken fellowship apart from Jesus Christ."[20]

The opportunities for worship and other occasions of spiritual fellowship were recognized by many as being of great importance. It was at these times that the real basis

21 Henry W. Hobson, "The Birth At Madras", The International Review of Missions," July, 1939, p. 346.

22 Loc. Cit.

23 William Watkins Reid, "There Were Methodists at Madras", World Outlook, March, 1939, p. 4.

24 Hobson, Op. Cit., p. 340.

of Christian unity was felt most clearly, and deep impressions of the presence of God were made. The color of the skin or the difference in cultural background were lost sight of in the supreme act of worship. As one delegate stated, "Again and again as we approached the throne of God together we became more than ever convinced of our oneness as His children and of the reality of that corporate relationship which includes all followers of His Son as members of His Church."[21] Furthermore, "To many the high level of these experiences came in the great service of the Holy Communion on Christmas morning, in which the whole membership of the Council shared."[22]

Christian unity has been mentioned above. This recognition of a new sense of unity among all Christians was one of the important values that came from the Conference. A certain delegate remarked that, "one of the most outstanding impressions thus far at the meeting on the campus of Madras Christian College is the very unity and agreement of the Christian family."[23] Moreover, "the experience at Madras gave birth to the conviction that this unity among Christians is not merely something we desired to achieve, but something we were actually achieving, and further, something that must be achieved in ever greater reality for the whole Church."[24] Commenting further, Bishop Hobson wrote, "As an integral part of this new conviction on the unity among Christians, which was born during the meeting,

25 I bid., p. 341.

26 H. Kerr Taylor, "A Milestone in Missionary Progress", The Missionary Review of the World, April, 1939, p. 188.

27 Ibid., p. 189.

was the deeper realization of the existence of the Church as a living, God-given organism which included us all as members of one Body."[25]

Thus far mention has been made of only commendable features of the Tambaram meeting. As one studies the various reports of the Conference, expressions of praise and gratification are most dominant, yet to give a complete picture cognizance of weaknesses must be taken. In the first place, it has been observed, "There was a recurring indication throughout the days of conference that secondary consideration is often being given to the basic necessity on all fields of a truly indigenous church life. In more than one commission, and in the plenary sessions, the conference avoided the question of self-support."[26] Along this same line H. Kerr Taylor made an interesting statement about the indigenous church life. He said, "Present day leadership partakes too largely of Western viewpoint and support. The church on the field is not native enough. It is oriented too largely to the West. Its dress shows it. The structure of its cooperative and representative enterprises is conditioned too largely on foreign funds."[27]

Certain members of the Conference and not a few leaders in the Church at large felt that Madras should have come out more strongly in its statements about current world conditions. Some held that a definite stand should have been taken in regard to the military aggression of the

28 Madras Series, Vol. 7, pp. 165 ff.

29 Ralph E. Diffendorfer, "Madras and the World Mission", World Outlook, June, 1939, p. 42.

totalitarian countries. The Conference as a whole decided, however, that inasmuch as there were delegates present from these countries, it would not be wise to take any specific condemnatory action which would needlessly jeopardize the lives of these members and perhaps even thwart the work of the Church in their native lands. A number of special resolutions in regard to these matters were passed, and statements of them were included in the Conference reports.[28]

It is difficult to make an adequate appraisal of the continuing results of the Madras Conference. Matters of the Spirit were dealt with there, and they do not easily yield themselves to mathematical computation. Yet abiding values for the Church Universal came out of the Tambaram Meeting. Perhaps a statement by Secretary Ralph Diffendorfer epitomizes one of these values. He wrote: "We came away from Madras with a clear call to renewed effort on a scale not yet realized by the World Mission--not a spasmodic effort but a sustained support deeply rooted in the essential character of the Christian life and message and in the meaning of the Church."[29] An evidence that this call has been heard and heeded by the Church is the way in which it has carried on so nobly in the midst of war and distress during the years since 1938. This has been particularly true in China, where the Church has struggled against terrific odds. It has made a valiant stand there and has given spiritual enlightenment and material help to multitudes.

30 Hendrick Kraemer, "An Impression of Madras Conference", The Missionary Review of the World, April, 1939, p. 191.

31 Taylor, Op. Cit., p. 188.

Another value, expressed by Dr. Kraemer, is of importance. He said, "Probably the most abiding impression I carry with me is the expectation that from this conference a new fire will spread through all the churches and mission fields, a new fire of wholehearted surrender to the divine commission of evangelizing the world in all its spheres, and of strong loyalty to the Church as the fellowship in Christ."[30] Evidence is not lacking that this fire has spread and will continue to spread throughout the Christian world.

In more concrete terms another member of the Conference pointed out the definite fields in which lasting contributions were made:

> In such realms as the nature and function of the Church, its witness and relation to the non-Christian systems, its worship, ministry and literature, and its social responsibilities and relation to the State, together with its larger corporate life, the conference made significant contributions to current thought and provided for the Christian enterprise a compendium for serious and extended study during the next decade.[31]

Much of the best thought and work of the Conference in these and other realms has been conserved in the volumes which were published by the International Missionary Council. These include The World Mission of the Church, and the seven volumes of the Madras Series. To these we shall refer frequently.

Thus, in this first chapter, something of the historical background, the outstanding features, and some of the continuing values of the Madras Conference have been considered. In the next chapter our attention is turned to certain phases of the Christian Church in China to which the Madras Conference was significantly related.

CHAPTER II

RELEVANT FEATURES OF THE CHINESE CHURCH IN THE PAST

For a proper understanding of the inner life of the Chinese Church today, it is important to consider certain facts which have strongly influenced the growth and development of that church in the past. From the days of the Apostle Paul to the present, the establishment of Christianity in new lands has never been easy. Missionaries have almost always met severe difficulties. China was no exception, and problems of every sort were faced in founding the Christian Church there.

Factors Retarding Growth of the Church

The natural conservatism of the people was one of the very strong influences that hindered the establishment and growth of the Church in China. Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China, reached Canton in 1807. He soon found that he was in the midst of a people with markedly conservative tendencies. They looked with great pride on the priceless heritage of a glorious past. Their country had been a strong cultural and political unit for centuries. New ideas, and especially those introduced by a foreigner, were frowned upon. Such a revolutionary philosophy as Christianity could be viewed only with disdain.

The teaching of Confucius was the primary force in

1 Arthur H. Smith, Rex Christus, p. 96.

2 Records of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of China, Shanghai, 1890, p. 391.

3 Ibid., pp. 392,393.

maintaining these conservative ideals over a long period of time. He was "that one of the ancients who most effectively determined the key-note of the thought and life of the Chinese race, and it was done by reverence and admiration for the ancients, and by struggling at all costs to imitate their example."[1] This type of thinking among the Chinese made it difficult to change their inner life.

The early missionaries in China felt they were working in an atmosphere of heathenism, many aspects of which were definite obstacles to the spiritual growth of their converts. For example, the Rev. R. H. Graves, speaking at the Missionary Conference in Shanghai, 1890, said,

> How often we have to lament that many who begin the new life with their spiritual sensibilities quickened, ere long succumb to the worldly influences around them. Family prayer is neglected, the Bible read only occasionally during the week,... and the Divine life in their souls almost stifled by the close, malarious atmosphere of heathenism and worldliness, in the midst of which they are obliged to spend their lives.[2]

Moreover, this speaker revealed other conditions that were detrimental to the spiritual life of the church members. He remarked that "the ideals set before them in their classics tend to distort their consciences. Expediency and politeness are exalted above truth and right.... The maxims of the market are the maxims of deceit. The whole atmosphere is tainted with untruthfulness."[3]

In spite of conditions mentioned, the number of Christian converts gradually increased and the Church was established. Yet the path of the Chinese Christians was not

4 Arthur J. Brown, New Forces in Old China, p. 272.

easy and open persecution was frequent. Parents often encountered the bitter hostility of their children, and on the other hand, children on becoming Christians were sometimes beaten by their parents. Even where no open violence occurred, various ways were found to make life hard for the professing Christians. Writing in 1907, Arthur J. Brown pointed out that "For the average Christian, loss of business, social ostracism, bitter hatred are the common price. Near Peking a young man was thrice beaten and denied the use of the village well, mill and field insurance, because he became a Christian."[4]

Concern for Spiritual Life by Early Leaders

Conservatism, an atmosphere of heathenism, and persecution were factors which retarded the growth of the Church in China. To overcome these difficulties, however, certain other forces were active. One such force was the concern that many missionary leaders had for the culture and continuous development of the inner life of the Chinese Church. Robert Morrison, J. Hudson Taylor, Jonathan Goforth and other stalwart pioneers were always interested in developing strong, vital Christians. They used different methods oftentimes, but their goal was the same.

The early missionary conferences gave definite attention to this matter of developing the spiritual life of the Christians. Notable meetings were held at Shanghai

5 W. S. Ament, "The Spiritual Needs of Native Christians" in The Evangelisation of China, p. 45.

6 Ibid. p. 46.

in 1877, 1890 and 1907. Smaller missionary groups met at Peking and several other places in 1896. A number of pertinent helps for deepeningthe inner life came out of these conferences.

One leader said that

> the real growth of our native church in spiritual things will depend more or less upon a proper conception of the cardinal truths of Christianity and the relations between them and men....Anything which comes short of the central truth of the Gospel, the incarnation of the Son of God for the salvation of the whole world, would mean a return to heathenism and practically giving up the battle. A vigorous life can be developed only with a proper understanding of the scheme of salvation as represented in the New Testament.[5]

Another suggestion was that the real nature of prayer should be taught. It was easy for the Christian converts to cling to the heathen idea of prayer. That idea centered around petition and did not include adoration and thanksgiving; hence, proper training in the true meaning of Christian prayer was important.

A third means of help for growth in spiritual life as pointed out by a conference speaker was that of Christian service. He said, "The spirituality of the native brethren will be increased as they realize the necessity of incessant activity for Christ and His church. Mere activity will be of little avail without the corresponding inner life, but in China the tendency is to spiritual inertia."[6] Intelligent study of the Bible was considered to be very important, and missionaries were urged "to encourage the reading of the Bible as one of the surest ways of deepening the spiritual

7 Records of China Centenary Missionary Conference, Shanghai, 1907, p. 31.

8 Records of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of China, Shanghai, 1877, p. 264.

9 Brown, Op. Cit., p. 268.

10 Ibid., pp. 268,269.

life."[7] At one of the conferences, a speaker pleaded, "Let us teach the Chinese Christians to sit at the feet of Christ, not Confucius, and learn of Him. So shall much that now hinders their growth be broken down and dispelled, much that is erroneous in opinion and wrong in practice. So shall insincerity and pride, and a vain conceit of moral ability, give place to truth and lowliness of mind."[8]

Type of Christians Developed

The concern that church leaders had for cultivation of the spiritual life bore fruit in the type of Christians that were developed in China. Not all the converts became saints, by any means, but the rank and file of the believers gave daily testimony to their Christian faith. Many were particularly faithful in the matter of attending church. One observer noted that "the Chinese Christian does not content himself with church attendance once a week when the weather is pleasant or an attractive theme is announced. He does not find himself in vigorous health for an evening entertainment, and with a bad headache on prayer-meeting night."[9] A missionary pastor said that "the attendance at his mid-week meeting was as large as at his Sunday morning service, that every member asked a blessing at the table, had family prayers, and tried to bring his unconverted friends to Christ."[10]

The most significant evidence of the strength and

11 Robert H. Glover, The Progress of World-Wide Missions, p. 145.

12 Brown, Op. Cit., p. 273.

13 Smith, Op. Cit., p. 208.

inner vitality of the Christian movement in China by the end of the nineteenth century was the martyrdom during the Boxer uprising of hundreds of Chinese Christians. This Boxer trouble of 1900 grew out of a rising tide of anti-foreign feeling in governmental and political circles. "An elaborate plot was hatched to murder or drive out every 'foreign devil' and to stamp out every seed of hated foreignism from the country."[11] The plot was carried out in part and scores of foreigners were cruelly murdered. As associates of the foreigners and partakers of their religion, the blow fell on the Chinese Christians, also, and far more heavily.

Multitudes faced the purging nobly. Indeed, "the behaviour of the Chinese Christians under the baptism of blood and fire to which they were subjected in the Boxer uprising eloquently testified to the genuineness of their faith."[12]

> Great numbers resisted every effort to make them renounce their faith, though they were sometimes buried alive by degrees, opportunity being given at different stages of the process to save themselves. In other instances they were roasted to death with kerosene, or hacked into small pieces with swords, their bodies thrown into running streams, or burned to ashes which were ground under heavy rollers to prevent the victims from rising within three days from the dead and exacting vengeance.[13]

A Chinese pastor was 120 miles from his home when the trouble started. "He was safe where he was, but he hurried back to die with his flock. He was stabbed, his arm twisted out of joint and his back scorched with burning candles in the

14 Brown, Op. Cit., p. 275.

15 Ibid., p. 276.

effort to make him recant. But he stedfastly refused to compromise either himself or his people and was finally beheaded."[14] The fortitude of these persecuted Christians was truly remarkable, and it is said "that in many cases the Boxers cut out the hearts of their victims to find the secret of such sublime faith, declaring: 'They have eaten the foreigner's medicine.'"[15]

This triumphant witness of the Boxer martyrs was a glowing testimony to the strength of their inner spiritual life. Moreover, it proved to many Chinese who were formerly hostile that Christianity was a vital religion. After the persecution died down, the Church expanded with new life and vigor, and outstanding stalwart Christian leaders were developed. Not a few of these leaders became prominent both within and without the Church, and Christianity came to have an ever widening influence.

A few outstanding Chinese Christian leaders of the past four decades may be mentioned. Dr. Cheng Ching-yi was chairman and a moving force in the great National Christian Conference, held at Shanghai in May, 1922. The National Christian Council grew out of this Conference. General Feng Yu-hsiang was a notable Christian soldier. Sun Yat Sen, founder of the Chinese Republic, accepted the Christian faith and was strongly influenced by its teachings. In more recent years such persons as T. Z. Koo, James Yen, and Bishop W.Y. Chen have come to the forefront as leaders

16 Henry P. Van Dusen, *What is the Church Doing ?*, p. 79.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 80.

18 *Loc. Cit.*

in the Christian movement. The Christian testimony of Generalissimo and Madame Chiang K'ai Shek has been influential likewise.

Perhaps the real strength of Christian leadership can be seen more clearly by consideration of a few figures. The Christian constituency in China, both Protestant and Catholic, is estimated at slightly less than one per cent of the total population. Yet one in every six of the persons listed in Who's Who in China is a Christian. Furthermore, half of those listed were educated in the Christian schools and colleges of China.[16]

A significant number of leaders in China's national government are active Christians. Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen, in his book, What is the Church Doing ?, says of this group: "Most of them (are) earnest, reverent men and women gripped and guided by a depth of personal religious experience and consecration almost unknown among persons in comparable positions in the West."[17] Furthermore, he writes, "It is hardly an exaggeration that among corresponding leaders in all of the 'Christian nations' of Europe and America, there is not more than one or at most two or three persons of Christian conviction and devotion to match five or six of China's foremost officials."[18] Such testimony is glowing evidence of the inner spiritual vitality of many Chinese Christian leaders.

This spiritual strength of leaders has been an

important force in helping to hold the Church together during the stress and strain of recent years, But the need of a deeper spiritual life for the Church at large is evident. The spirit of secularism, for example, has spread rapidly, and young people, especially, have been strongly tempted to give up the Christian faith. Communism is making a strong appeal to many. The incessant struggle for daily bread has tended to dull the desire for spiritual improvement. The terror of bombings and other horrors of war have not been conducive to culture of the soul.

Hence, any help for strengthening the spiritual life of the Church in China is welcomed by those who are concerned about its welfare. We believe the Madras Conference offered such help, so we turn now to a consideration of matters directly related to the Church's inner life.

1 Madras Series, Vol. IV, The Life of the Church, p. 1.

2 Loc. Cit.

CHAPTER III

ESSENTIAL FACTORS FOR STRENGTHENING THE INNER LIFE

Worship

The natural desire of men to worship is recognized by all religious faiths, and through the centuries many forms and ceremonies have been used in the effort to satisfy that desire. Men of all ages have prayed and in some manner have sought fellowship with God. Christianity proclaims, however, that it is only through Christ that the highest form of worship may be had. In fact, "Christian worship, ... is firmly based on the divine revelation in Christ and the redeeming act that took place in history. It is, therefore the thankful response of sinful children to the holy, forgiving Father, into whose living Presence they enter in their Saviour's Name."[1]

Furthermore, Christian worship "carries within itself penitence and the forsaking of sin, faith and obedience, receptivity and offering, concentration and affirmation, expectation and thanksgiving, love and adoration."[2] Thus, in worship we are dealing with the very heart of the inner life of both individuals and the Church as a collective body of Christians. Christian worship is much more than an outward acknowledgment of belief in God as the Sovereign of the universe; it is the response of the inner spirit to

3 H. F. Rall, "Why Should We Worship", The Christian Advocate, Oct. 19, 1944, p. 27.

4 H. F. Rall, "What Can Worship Do for Me ?", The Christian Advocate, Dec. 7, 1944, p. 27.

the matchless love of God as revealed in Christ. This response brings the human soul into satisfying fellowship with God.

Inasmuch as worship is so vitally connected with the inner life of Christians its importance can not easily be overemphasized. "Worship is not all of religion but it is the heart of religion and its spring. We seek God because our true life is in him. To worship is to find what is highest, to bow before it, and thus to rise to it."[3]

Christian worship is important, moreover, because of what it will do for the one who worships. Several results may be noted. Worship not only helps an individual to see and know God, but it also helps that one to know himself. Pride, selfishness, failure and sin may be brought to light as the soul is thrown open to God in the act of worship. Again, "True worship is the re-affirmation of purpose and the renewal of loyalty. Each hour of worship is a new offering of ourselves to God. Here we reflect again upon the true goal of life; once more we envisage the goods we most desire; the true ends for which we live, and then renew our dedication to these."[4] With this dedication the inner life is strengthened and is better able to meet the perplexing problems of everyday living. Furthermore, Christian worship brings an enlargement and enrichment to life. It lifts the worshipper above the mundane affairs of the day and helps him to see life in a new perspective.

5 Madras Series, Vol. IV, Op. Cit., p. 3.

Individual and collective worship are both of great value in strengthening the inner life, and neither can be neglected without poverty of soul resulting. However, common worship may be particularly helpful to young Christians in a non-Christian land such as China. The section on worship at Madras reported: "We have learned...that in carefully guided common worship, groups of new believers best learn to apprehend with heart and spirit the truths in which they are instructed, and that such worship proves to have a liberating and transforming effect on those who all their lifetime were subject to the bondage of ignorance and scorn."[5]

Christian leaders in China and other lands have recognized the fact that worship is not a static experience. It is an experience that should become increasingly meaningful in the life of every Christian. Spiritual vitality and power can not be attained unless there is a growing understanding and appreciation of the value of worship. The Madras Conference was wise, therefore, in making a number of suggestions for the enrichment of Christian worshippers.

First of all, the importance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was emphasized. This institution inaugurated by Christ himself is of the utmost significance, and properly understood, participation in it may be a most helpful act of worship. The Conference recommended "that each church should endeavor to lead its members into ever fuller

6 Ibid., p. 3.

7 Ibid., p. 4.

understanding and experience of the meaning of this Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ."[6] Another significant suggestion was that public intercessions of the Church should give a prominent place to the social and economic needs of the day. This practice will increase the scope of worship and help to expand the outlook of those who worship. One of the most important aids in worship, both private and public, is the wise use of the Bible. Madras emphasized this fact and pointed out "that through Holy Scripture comes uniquely the knowledge of God and His revelation of Himself to man, and that such knowledge is basic to faith and worship,..."[7] A fresh search into the Old Testament was particularly urged. It was recommended, further, that church leaders study various plans for securing more regular and devotional reading of the Scriptures by all Christians.

One of the significant emphases of the section studying worship at Madras was on the use of indigenous forms of art, architecture, and music. Not a few church leaders, both in the East and in the West, have felt that Christianity in the younger churches has partaken too much of the forms of the West. Worship patterns have, for the most part, followed those introduced from Europe and America. The feeling is growing now, however, that much wider use should be made of the best in local style of art and architecture. For example, one authority specializing in

8 D. J. Fleming, Heritage of Beauty, p. 39.

9 Ibid., p. 40.

10 Ibid., p. 12.

ecclesiastical architecture "holds that if Christianity is to be at home in China it must not be lodged in buildings of Western pattern, totally at variance with the Chinese temperament, climate and landscape."[8] Fortunately, progress is being made in this direction. "Several Protestant denominations have maintained their own architects in China. Many individual Protestant missionaries, also, have given creative thought to the development of a Chinese architecture for the Chinese Church and for Christian institutions."[9] The impetus given by the emphasis at Madras will no doubt aid the development in this line.

Professor D. J. Fleming in his excellent book, Heritage of Beauty, from which quotations have just been given, points out why a consideration of this subject is important. He writes: "The main reason for study and experimentation in the adaptation of indigenous cultures to Christianity is the hope that an indigenous church may develop--a church that smacks of the soil, that grows naturally, that feels itself to be native and not exotic. The members of such a church are to be nationals ' in their bones'."[10] Hence, Chinese Christians are likely to worship more wholeheartedly and freely in churches that do not seem foreign to them.

The use of hymns set to native music may be helpful also. For example, in some sections of China there has developed "a love of singing whole chapters of the Bible to

11 Madras Series, Vol. IV., Op. Cit., p. 7

the setting of old Chinese airs and folk-tunes as a part of corporate worship and in their homes."[11] Also, a recent volume, Hymns of the People, edited by a Chinese leader, T. C. Chao, is being widely used. Chu Pao-yuan's Book of Indigenous Worship Forms is helpful. Thus, certain of the best features of Chinese life and culture are being used as aids to worship, and a still wider employment of them would be profitable.

The Christian Home

The home has been an important unit in the development of all civilized societies, but in no country has the home been of greater significance than in China. Throughout the country's long history the family has been a central institution of Chinese civilization. The home has had a vital relationship to the social, economic, political, religious and educational life of the people for generations. Unquestionably this high regard for the home is one of the reasons why China has had such a long and rich history. Filial piety and reverence for ancestors may have retarded progress in some lines, but at least they helped to keep society intact.

This important position of the home in Chinese life is of no little significance to Christianity and particularly to the development of the inner life of the Christian Church in China. If the homes can be made truly Christian, their

12 Helen B. K. Maclean, "The Christian Home", The International Review of Missions, July, 1939, p. 368.

13 Madras Series, Vol. IV., Op. Cit., p. 16.

influence can be of untold value. Moreover, the home is the best place for Christian nurture, and if proper guidance is given here, strong, vigorous Christians may be developed. It is well that the Church is giving increasing attention to this matter.

The question may be asked, What is a Christian home?. A delegate at Madras gave a very fiting answer. "The Christian home," she said, "is a place where God is real, where Christ's values obtain, where personality is respected, where the worth of the smallest and weakest is recognized, where burden-bearing is a habit and a joyful one, where courtesy is a rule of life, where trust and loyalty founded on love is natural between the members of the family."[12] Furthermore, "The distinguishing quality of a Christian home is that Jesus Christ is the center, and all its members seek to obey His law of self-denying love."[13]

The section at Madras reporting on the Christian home pointed out that a home where the way of Christ is preeminent would be:

1. a community where all members form a spiritual fellowship founded on loyalty and love;

2. a place of physical well-being where essential needs are supplied and where order, cleanliness and simple beauty prevail;

3. a haven of peace, security and refreshment for body, mind and spirit where God's loving care is daily demonstrated;

4. a school where Christian habits and attitudes are exemplified by the older members of the family and

14 Ibid., p. 17.

lovingly taught to the children from their earliest years,...

5. a working fellowship of equal privilege for both sexes, affording an atmosphere in which each member, old and young, may grow, and in which his best contribution can be made; and in which concerns affecting one and all are shared by all;

6. a refuge where the personality of each has freedom to develop and where a desire for privacy is respected and understood;

7. a place of vision where widening social and world horizons open out before each member of the family, its guests and those who serve within it, so that the home becomes a Christian leaven in the community.[14]

A home with such standards as these is the ideal place for the development of deep spiritual life. The truly Christian home provides an atmosphere wherein the inner life may grow and expand. The principles of Christian living can be learned more easily in the surroundings of the home than in any other environment.

One of the fundamentals of spiritual growth is that of obedience. An attitude of submission to the laws of God is necessary for advancement in the Christian life. This kind of attitude may be acquired in the Christian home. Children that learn to obey their parents are not likely to have difficulty in learning to obey God. As obedience becomes the normal habit of life spiritual development will follow.

The Christian home has the opportunity likewise of establishing habits of devotion. If prayer and Bible

15 Isaac S. Corn, "The Church that is in Your House", The Christian Advocate, Nov. 23, 1944, p. 9.

16 Maclean, Op. Cit., p. 365.

reading are habitual with the parents, children can be taught the value of these practices without difficulty. Through prayer the little child can have a growing appreciation and understanding of God. Wise Christian parents, moreover, by precept and example will teach their children the spiritual values of proper observance of the Lord's day. This is particularly important in a country like China where few people recognize Sunday as a day of worship and special cultivation of the inner life.

Thus, a home where the spirit of Christ prevails can be of very great value in stimulating spiritual growth, particularly in the lives of growing children. As one writer states, "In a religious atmosphere, religious children grow naturally; in an environment of love, good will and understanding children grow in religious attitudes, spirit and demeanor."[15] Furthermore, "What is learned consciously or unconsciously in the early years in the home will form the foundation of the future life and career of the child."[16] The worth of the home as a place of Christian nurture can not be overemphasized.

The close relationship of the Christian home and development of spiritual life was recognized by early missionaries in China. Catholic workers in the nineteenth century, for example, as a rule did not encourage individuals to become Christians. "The effort was made, rather, to win at least a family.... It was felt that an individual would

17 Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of the Expansion of Christianity", Vol. VI, p. 281.

18 J. Campbell Gibson, Mission Problems and Mission Methods in South China, p. 257.

19 Mary Ninde Gamewell, New Life Currents in China, p. 198.

20 Records China Centenary Missionary Conference 1907, pp. 296,297.

have difficulty in maintaining his faith and that if the natural social group the family, joined, particularly in conjunction with other families, Christianity would have a greater chance of surviving and spreading."[17] A Protestant missionary writing sometime later said, "We have continual testimonies from those who come to us as applicants for baptism that they have been influenced more by what they have known of the life of Christian neighbours and friends than by hearing public preaching,..."[18] Christian workers of the past and of the present realize that "it is on the family the church of China must chiefly rely for its strength and permanence."[19]

The pertinent values of the Christian home as an agent for strengthening the inner life of the Church can be recognized easily, but it must be stated also that they are not quite so easily achieved. Difficulties and barriers must be overcome if a modern Chinese home is to be made a center of Christian faith and practice. For example, "In the ...social conditions of Chinese life the hindrances to setting up a family altar are many and formidable. Overcrowding, lack of privacy and want of system, characterise most Chinese homes, so that there is little time or place for anything, and the oft-recurring excuse for the neglect of family worship is, that it is 'not convenient'."[20] Fortunately, this and other problems are being recognized and efforts are being made to overcome them.

21 Ralph A. Felton, "The Rural Church in China", The Chinese Recorder, Mar. 1938, p. 115.

22 Loc. Cit.

Writing shortly before the Madras Conference, Professor Ralph A. Felton stated that "One of the newest developments in the Chinese church is the great emphasis put upon Christianizing the home and the family. Probably in no other country in the world is this subject receiving so much thought on the part of church leaders."[21] Furthermore, he pointed out some of the ways that are being used to make the home Christian. "Many of the churches", he said, "put on an annual Home-Week Campaign. Exhibits of Christian pictures for homes, the training of parents, instructions for young people in marriage problems, and the inaugurating of family worship are a part of this Christianizing-the-Home Campaign."[22] This sort of program is in keeping with the recommendation at Madras that the local church should give definite instructions and training in the task of building the Christian home.

Other suggestions from Madras were:

1. The Bible must be restored to its rightful place in family and individual life.
2. Parents must be reminded of their privilege and obligation to train the children to pray.
3. Church and home should cooperate in making the Lord's Day a day of joy and recreation.
4. The Church should encourage a more wholesome fellowship among young men and women.
5. The Church should instruct married couples in preparation for parenthood and the responsibilities of home life.

23 Madras Series, Vol. IV, Op. Cit., pp.20,21.

24 Ibid., p. 23.

6. The Church should provide for training, from the earliest years, in the Christian stewardship of time, money and possessions.[23]

The need of trained leaders for carrying out this kind of program was recognized, and it was recommended that special courses dealing with the home should be offered in the seminaries. It was felt, furthermore, that women have a special significance in the home, and, "in view of this fact, it is of vital importance that Christian women...be urged to take seriously the building up of the truly Christian home, sparing no effort and no sacrifice and using all the means at their disposal to train themselves for this important task."[24]

Religious Education

In the early days of the modern missionary movement, the majority of church leaders did not pay very much attention to religious education as a formal part of the Church's responsibility. The chief emphasis was on evangelism and the making of converts. As the years have gone by, however, wide-awake Christian leaders in all lands have realized that if Christianity is to become vital the converts must be instructed in the ways of Christian living. Their inner lives must be developed and strengthened. With this realization has come a recognition of the fact that religious education needs much more emphasis than it has had in the past.

In considering religious education as a primary factor

25 The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, Religious Education , Vol. II, p. 148.

for strengthening the inner life, it is important to have a clear understanding of the meaning and scope of such education. One valuable report on the subject states: "Religious education in the Christian sense includes all efforts and processes

1. Which help to bring children and adults into a vital and saving experience of God as revealed in Christ;

2. Which quicken in them the sense of God as a living reality, so that communion with Him in prayer and worship becomes the controlling factor in life;

3. Which enable them to interpret their growing experience of life in the light of ultimate values;

4. Which develop in them the habit of studying the Holy Scriptures as one of the chief means of sustaining and deepening their spiritual life; and

5. Which establish in them attitudes and habits of Christ-like living in all human relations."[25]

From this interpretation it will be seen that religious education is vitally connected with the growth and development of the inner life of the Christian. In fact, it is not too much to say that without religious education there can be no strengthening of the spiritual life. The initial experience of salvation may be gradual or it may be sudden but in either case many influences enter into the process and the inner life is touched. Communion with God in prayer and worship become controlling factors in life only as they are continually made more real and vital. The Holy Scriptures are a valuable means of deepening the spiritual life, but they need to be explained, and helps

26 Ibid., p. 65.

27 Ibid., p. 67.

for their proper interpretation are important. Thus, the Church in China, as in other lands, is wise when it gives a great deal of attention to this matter of religious education.

Having recognized the great significance of religious education the problem arises as to how its processes may be carried out. The home, the school and the church are the three most valuable agencies for making religious education worthwhile.

The subject of the Christian home has already been discussed, but further consideration is to the point here. The whole program of Christian education falls down unless it is backed by adequate instruction in the home. One authority points out that "the moral and religious education of children and the growth in Christian character and experience of adults depends very largely upon the life of the family of which they are members."[26] No other unit of society can "beget and train the inner emotional springs of the moral life as the family does in its atmosphere of personal affection, love, and loyalty."[27] So the Christian family has unlimited possibilities in this field of religious education.

Although the home is supremely important in the matter of Christian training, the processes of religious education should not stop there. They ought to be continued and enlarged in the Christian school, for the school is

28 Ibid., p. 69.

29 Ibid., p. 150.

30 Madras Series, Vol. IV, Op. Cit., p. 67.

> rich in the opportunities it affords for religious education. This is especially true of the boarding school, where the staff are brought into close and continuous relations with the pupils and where staff and pupils can become a society and fellowship living together in an atmosphere of worship and working together for the realization of Christian purposes.[28]

Christian schools have had a very wide influence in China, but their program of religious education has frequently been inadequate. Government restrictions have been a hindrance at times. In some cases, educators have not realized the full significance and value of a well rounded religious education program. "The charge has been made that Bible study is the most poorly taught subject in the average Christian school;"[29] and occasionally there is opposition to religious instruction as a part of the required curriculum. The present war in China has changed some of these conditions, but both now and in the future, Christian educators need to keep in mind the important values that religious education in the school has for the enrichment of the spiritual lives of the students.

The church is a third agency for carrying on the program of religious education. Mention has already been made of the fact, however, that this institution has been slow in realizing its responsibility in this area. The Chinese delegation at Madras, 1938, reported that in China ten "years ago only the first beginnings toward a comprehensive religious education movement had been made."[30] Fortunately since those beginnings considerable progress

31 Ibid., pp. 61,63.

32 Ibid., p. 64.

has been made, and the Chinese Church as a whole has assumed responsibility for providing an adequate plan of religious education for its constituency. Frank W. Price, C. S. Miao, and Timothy T. Lew have been outstanding leaders in this new program.

The Madras Conference made a number of helpful recommendations for strengthening the work of religious education.[31] One important suggestion was that curriculum materials should be rooted in the racial and cultural experience of the people. Sunday School helps, for instance, should not be mere translations of some quarterly written for Americans. Again, new approaches in religious education are possible through the use of the radio, moving pictures and dramatic presentations. The holding of summer camps and conferences for youth under the direction of the church can be very profitable. These have been popular in China and could be used more widely. Another suggestion of the Conference was that the church should give attention to its students who are in state schools. An adapted program of religious education needs to be made available for them. Christian hostels have been used successfully in some places. Madras emphasized, furthermore, that "religious education is not a separate item in the life of the local church but rather one description of all its activities. In a very real sense the whole of the life, work and worship of the local church may be described as an educational enterprise."[32]

33 Ibid., p. 65.

34 William Paton, "The Meeting of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram, Madras", The International Review of Missions, April, 1939, p. 171.

This important statement was made also:

> The strength of the inner life of the Church is dependent upon the strength of the individual church members. While corporate experiences offered in the fellowship of the Church and home are of great importance in making vital this inner life of the individual, nothing can take the place of those personal habits of Bible study and prayer in the daily life of the Christian.[33]

So, the whole program of religious education, carried on in the home, school and church must center around the spiritual development of the individual Christian. Every possible help needs to be given for strengthening the inner life.

Christian Literature

A fourth essential factor contributing to the growth of the spiritual life is that of Christian literature. The Madras Conference made a thorough study of this field and valuable results were obtained. One observer stated that "A first-rate report on the whole subject of Christian literature will, if it is followed up, make the Tambaram Meeting as memorable for the advance it caused in the field of Christian literature as was the Jerusalem Meeting for its rural work."[34] This is pertinent to the general subject under discussion, particularly because of the important place of literature in China.

For generations the written and printed page has had a high place in the Middle Kingdom. "China perhaps

35 Frank A. Smalley, "Christian Literature in China", The International Review of Missions, July, 1944, p.296.

36 Madras Series, Vol. IV, Op. Cit., p. 302.

37 Records of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of China, Shanghai, 1877, p. 205.

above all nations, ranks the literary art as the highest in the scale of human achievements. The literary man is envied as the one who holds the golden key to a vast store of wisdom and knowledge which surpasses in extent and grandeur the wealth of potentates."[35] "During the past few decades, literature has served as an important medium through which western civilization is introduced into China. In recent years, literature has played an even more important role in molding the thought-life of the people, especially the younger generation."[36]

The early Protestant missionaries to China recognized the value placed on literature, and sought to provide materials that would aid in the spread and establishment of the Christian Gospel. Of course major attention was given to the translation and publication of the Bible. Robert Morrison was the first outstanding figure in the preparation of Christian literature. Later missionaries did valuable work also, and in 1876, more than one thousand brochures and volumes of a religious nature were shown at an International Exhibition.[37] This start in religious literature was very helpful to the progress of the Christian movement. A missionary speaking in 1877 said, "Our books are intimately associated with all our other agencies in the line of their great influence, and contribute powerfully to such influence. ... Our converts are brought in by the truth of the books. The native Christians are spiritually fed on them. The

38 Ibid., p. 208.

39 James H. Franklin, The Christian Crisis in China, p. 84.

schools are trained by them. The Churches are founded and disciplined by them."[38]

Unfortunately the program of Christian literature has not kept pace with the numerical growth of the Church in China. For various reasons production and distribution of suitable reading materials for building up the Church have lagged. Secretary Franklin, of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, observed some years ago that "on most mission fields, but especially in China, where the printed page is held in great respect, it is hard to understand the very general neglect of the production and distribution of Christian literature."[39] Thus, the emphasis that Madras placed on this subject should be an impetus for the Chinese Church to enlarge its program of literature. It is of special value to the Church's inner life.

The printed page can be of inestimable enrichment to the devotional life of any Christian. In fact, it is not too much to say that the spiritual nature of an individual can not be developed to the fullest extent unless there is intelligent use of Christian literature. Inner motives and feelings are kindled by the inspiration that comes through reading. High resolves for noble living are strengthened by perusing good books. The soul is expanded as the message of the best literature of the ages is imbibed.

Writings which will do these things for the inner

40 Madras Series, Vol. IV, Op. Cit., p. 314.

life are of various types. First and foremost is the Bible. In the plan of God the Holy Scriptures for generations have been the greatest source of inspiration and light to those seeking to live the Christian life. Books of meditation are helpful also. Literature on the prayer life and methods of prayer can be very useful. Hymns are appreciated by many. Devotional material specially adapted to those who are sick or in sorrow is of importance. Writings dealing with the practice of the Christian life are valuable for young Christians particularly.

Furthermore, Christian literature is necessary in making worship, the Christian home and religious education effective as factors in strengthening the inner life. They are all closely connected, but Christian literature is one of the most vital links. If it is neglected the others will suffer, and Christian nurture will not progress as it should. Thus, the evidence is clear that the Church in China must develop an adequate program for Christian literature.

As stated at the Madras Conference, "A first step in... developing an adequate program of Christian literature in China is to create an insistent demand on the part of Christian leaders and workers in general for Christian literature. The use of such literature should be given a place in importance along side that of the direct preaching of the Gospel."[40] The feeling was expressed, moreover, that

41 Loc. Cit.

42 Ibid., p. 310.

43 Ibid., p. 312.

44 Ibid., p. 280.

when "Christian leaders and workers of all types from all parts of the field are sufficiently convinced of the imperative need of Christian literature, they will set themselves to the task of helping to devise ways and means for developing an adequate program."[41]

Madras made a number of suggestions for providing and carrying out the literature program. It was urged, for one thing, that especially qualified men be trained for responsible positions in publishing, bookselling and printing. Effort should be made to encourage those who may have natural gifts for writing. "Theological seminaries and departments of Chinese in the Christian colleges and universities should give careful attention to the discovery of promising writers and make special efforts to develop their talents."[42] After the materials are produced, attention must be given also to distribution.

In the past one of the drawbacks in the widespread distribution of Christian literature in China has been the lack of full cooperation among the agencies producing the materials. Efforts to remedy the situation have been made, but cooperation "in distribution has not progressed very far."[43] This situation is serious because, as was stated at Madras, "Distribution is the keystone of the arch of an adequate Christian literature program. The real key to the problem is whole-hearted cooperation among publishing agencies and among church and mission workers."[44]

45 *Loc. Cit.*

For the most part Christian literature in China has been distributed through sales in local book stores and by mail orders. Forward looking leaders at Tambaram suggested a number of other methods for increased use and distribution of materials. An occasional Literature Sunday or sometimes a Literature Week in local churches would give opportunity for calling special attention to the importance of good reading matter. In some places bookselling in bus and railway stations may be profitable. Another important suggestion is that there be "continual emphasis upon actual selling of suitable literature in all church conferences,..."[45]

The present war in China makes the carrying out of these plans very difficult, but realizing the significance of good reading material for the enrichment of the inner life of the Church, Christian leaders of the future will want to make every effort to provide an adequate program of Christian literature.

1 John R. Mott, "At Edinburgh, Jerusalem and Madras", The International Review of Missions, July 1938, p.319.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH'S INNER LIFE AND EVANGELISM

The Madras Conference considered many questions concerning the life and work of World Christianity. One of the most important of these was evangelism. Moreover, no other matter discussed is more closely connected with the inner life of the Church.

Dr. John R. Mott writing several months before the Conference stated: "The Madras meeting happily synchronizes with world-wide manifestations of the spirit of evangelism. Simultaneously in many parts of the world there are extensive and fruitful efforts to confront men with Christ and the claims of His marvellous Gospel. The Madras meeting will afford the opportunity of the ages to summon the Christian forces to the larger evangelism."[1] The Conference took advantage of this opportunity and a ringing challenge was given for Christians to make Christ known everywhere and in all areas of life.

This plea for renewed emphasis on evangelism is of significance for the Church in China. A strong spirit of evangelism has pervaded the Christian movement in China during much of its history. Professor Ralph A. Felton, after having made a special study of the Rural Church in China wrote in 1938:

> Evangelism is even today the greatest concern of the average pastor. Undoubtedly he ranks far ahead of

2 Ralph A. Felton, "The Rural Church in China", The Chinese Recorder, March 1938, p. 112.

3 James H. Franklin, The Christian Crisis in China, p. 59.

4 H. J. Veals, "The Central Place of Evangelism in the Post-War Period", p. 1.

> the American pastor in this respect. He preaches more sermons in a year in homes than in a church building. He preaches as many extra evangelistic sermons in a year with evangelistic bands or in campaigns as his Sunday sermons.[2]

Such activity is truly commendable, but with the increasing tide of secularism and other problems it has become very easy for the Church to lose its evangelistic passion--for the springs of its inner life to dry up. As one leader points out: "There is danger that unless the churches catch a vision of evangelism and sacrificial service they will become Christian clubs and fail to be the body of Christ in their communities. There is danger too that they will be mere preaching points, when at this hour in China there is need that they be service stations also."[3]

In thinking of the post-war situation in China the need of evangelism is paramount. At a recent post-war study conference, held in Toronto, Canada, this matter was emphasized. The following facts were pointed out:

> School and hospital and other agencies have largely done their work. They are going to be taken over, in the main, by government and other agencies. A large constituency has been created of people who are sympathetic towards the church but who have perhaps never thought of making any commitment to it. The church's influence is great beyond its own membership, but that influence will not be retained after a few years unless the membership of the church is greatly increased and the churches strengthened in spiritual tone as well.[4]

Thus, evangelism and the strengthening of the spiritual life must be of vital concern to the Church in China. Having pointed out this fact, however, it will be of value to

5 Madras Series, Vol. III, Evangelism, pp. 45 ff.

consider more fully the meaning and message of evangelism and its correlation with the inner life.

The Meaning and Message of Evangelism

With the increasing emphasis on the need of evangelism it is very necessary that there be a proper conception of its true meaning. The idea which an individual or a church has about evangelism will determine to a considerable extent what is done about it. If the viewpoint is too narrow the program of evangelism will not accomplish what it should; if, on the other hand, it is too broad, the work of evangelism is likely to be shallow and thus will not touch the inner springs of life.

In view of the importance of the meaning of evangelism, previous to the Madras Conference the International Missionary Council secured statements on the subject from outstanding Christian leaders. Their thinking is so clear and forceful that a number of the best pronouncements are reported here:[5]

Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa, Kingdom of God Movement, Japan.

> Evangelism means the conversion of people from worldliness to Christlike godliness. Conversion is absolutely fundamental, for without the awakening of a spiritual hunger, there is no hope for an individual, a society, a race or a nation.

Dr. J. S. Ryang, General Superintendent, Korean Methodist Church.

> Evangelism is a passion to share Christ with others.

> It is a heart-desire to impart the knowledge of Jesus Christ to others and to share His love and grace with them through any and all forms of service.

Dr. L. H. Roots, Bishop of Hankow, China.

> Evangelism means making known the love of God in Christ so that the Spirit of Christ may rule in the whole life as the good news which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. This involves what I think is rightly described as the Christian Revolution whereby the rule of self, or of man, is displaced by the rule of Christ in every relationship of life.

Dr. E. Stanley Jones, World Evangelist, Ashram, Lucknow, India.

> Evangelism is the good news of the Kingdom of God on earth, that Kingdom personalized and embodied in Christ through whom this gracious offer comes in nail-pierced hands, signs of what it cost Him to make this offer in spite of our sins, and who ever lives to make that Kingdom effective in the individual and the social will, and who offers us now an individual and social new birth as the first steps toward the realization of that Kingdom.

Each one of these statements is worthy of considerable study, for they get at the root of evangelism. They show that evangelism is inseparably connected with the inner life. Conversion deals with the heart. The desire to make known the love of God to others springs from an inner compulsion. The Holy Spirit moves on the inmost thoughts and feelings of a man. Christian service loses its significance unless it is carried out in a spirit of Christian love and is backed by pure motives. We may say, then, that evangelism is the effort of Christians, individually and collectively, to share the abundant life

6 Ibid., p. 53.

7 Ibid., p. 54.

that they have found in Christ with all those who do not know Him.

The message of evangelism is fundamental. Man-made programs in the Church will fail unless they are impregnated with a life-giving message. The emphasis at Madras was strong on this point. John R. Mott's statement was particularly clear. He said, "The core of evangelism is the presentation of the Gospel--the Christian message that God loves mankind and has sent His Son into the world to save men through the life, death and resurrection of His Son and the indwelling of His Holy Spirit."[6] This has ever been the basic message of the true Christian evangelist. Such a Gospel is relevant to every man's deepest need. "It deals with his spiritual and moral ill-health. It enables him to make the necessary readjustments that will overcome or remove the tensions that thwart and paralyze him. It ushers him into a full, abounding and creative life."[7]

The Christian Gospel, moreover, is concerned with man's social needs and problems. In the early days of the Christian movement in China there was little emphasis on this phase of evangelism. In recent years, however, greater attention has been given to it and church leaders are recognizing that the social environment is of concern to the Christian Church. It is seen that "Nothing less than carrying out the will of God fully in all the relationships of life can completely express the idea of the Kingdom

8 Loc. Cit.

9 Veals, Op. Cit., p. 1.

10 Madras Series, Vol. III, Op. Cit., p. 42.

which Christ taught must be the first object of the quest of His followers."[8]

The Rev. H. J. Veals in a paper read at the post-war study conference previously mentioned summed up the message of evangelism when he said:

> The message must be two-fold. We must insist upon a complete and all-out commitment and loyalty to the person of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord for the individual and for society. By acknowledgment and confession of his own sinful tendencies the Christian preacher and layman must create a 'sense of sin' which seems often not to be present in the minds of the people of China. Along with this sense of sin and need for personal salvation should go a call to service.[9]

Correlation of Evangelism and the Inner Life

The close relationship of evangelism and the Church's inner life has already been suggested, but further discussion of the correlation of the two is to the point here. A leader at Madras stated, "A revival in evangelism is as likely to cause a revival of religion, as a revival of religion is likely to result in a revival of witness-bearing."[10] Thus, evangelism and the condition of the inner life can not be divorced. They react upon each other.

Many factors contribute to the spiritual strength of a church, but one which lacks a spirit of vital evangelism is not a growing church. It may have forms and ceremonies, but such a church will not be meeting New Testament standards; it will not be a true representative of the body of Christ.

11 Ibid., p. 40.

12 Ibid., pp. 370,371.

"Evangelism is a necessary factor for growth in church life. Deprive the indigenous Church of its God-given task--you will inevitably kill the divine life implanted in it."[11] It is the nature of Christianity to expand. When the good things of the Christian life are shared there is growth and expansion. When there is no effort to give of what has been received, the inner life loses its joy and religion becomes only a form.

The Rev. Frank Whittaker, a delegate at Madras, in a paper on evangelism discussed certain Christian communities in India where the spirit of evangelism was at a low ebb. The churches in those areas were existing on the strength of a more vital movement in the past, but were making practically no effort in the field of evangelism. The writer pointed out that

> the only hope for a forward movement in such areas would seem to be a revival of spiritual life among all who bear the name of Christ--a revival which leads to earnest and steadfast witness-bearing. The spiritual life of the Church becomes powerless and corrupt if the impulse to evangelize disappears.[12]

Mr. Whittaker was right. The Church in India, in China and in every other land must have a living spirit of evangelism if the spiritual life is to be vibrant and growing.

"It is when the evangelistic aim is dominant that the inner life of the Church remains pure and strong in devotion, knowledge, love and sacrificial giving of wealth and life. The impulse to share Christ with others provides the only

13 Ibid., p. 376.

14 Loc. Cit.

15 Ibid., p. 369.

16 Ibid., p. 392.

adequate incentive to seek, as God's gift, the discipline, faith and courage needed to face opposition, endure persecution and 'overcome the world.'"[13] Furthermore, evangelism is the "one task big enough to drive out pettiness and self-will, to make the Church wholly dependent upon God, sensitive to His guidance, obedient to His direction and ready to do His work in the way He points, in the power of His Holy Spirit."[14]

Evangelism is a contributing factor to the development of the Church's inner life, but, on the other hand, success in any evangelistic program is largely dependent on the spiritual condition of those carrying out the program. Evangelism which is not backed by dynamic spirituality will not reach its goal. As one writer says, "the main causes for success or failure in the life and growth of the Church are to be found, not in external conditions prevailing among non-Christians, but in the spiritual condition of the Church itself."[15]

The findings of the Madras meeting were emphatic in this matter. One strong pronouncement was:

> The Church's evangelistic enterprise derives directly from the <u>congregation</u> or local church. When its corporate worship and the life of its members glow with the presence of God, the company becomes creative. Pastoral and evangelistic gifts are developed among the members of the congregation, and leaders are discovered and contributed to the Church at large.[16]

Thus, it is clearly evident that spiritual vitality is necessary for success in evangelism.

17 A. W. Wasson, Church Growth in Korea, p. 32.

An outstanding example of the truth of this principle is seen in the story of the remarkable revival movement which spread over Korea in the early days of the Protestant Church in that land. The revival started in 1903 in the city of Wonsan. In August of that year a group of missionaries planned to meet together for a week of Bible study and prayer. Previously one of the missionaries, Dr. R. A. Hardie, had been asked to prepare several papers on the subject of prayer. During a period of study for these he felt a great lack in his own spiritual life. Thereupon he confessed his need to God, and the Holy Spirit came upon him with unusual power. Dr. Hardie spoke of this rich experience to his fellow missionaries and later to Korean co-workers. Soon they had similar experiences, and the newly found spiritual power resulted in constant witnessing. A new spirit of evangelism spread throughout the Korean Church, and thousands of Koreans were converted to the Christian faith.

A. W. Wasson, in his book, Church Growth in Korea, points out a number of significant results of this great movement. He says the first outstanding result was " a transformation in the lives of the members of the church. Like a great cleansing fire it moved through the churches and lifted the morality of its members to a plane of sincerity and purity never attained before."[17] A further result of the revival was "an acceleration of the growth of the church

18 Loc. Cit.

19 Madras Series, Vol. III, Op. Cit., p. 384.

in numbers. During the next three years the number of Christians increased three fold. There is no doubt that the revival had much to do with this increase. The transformation wrought by the revival in the life of the church made it a more zealous and effective agency for winning new converts."[18] The influence of the movement has continued to the present day.

And thus it has been on every mission field. A revitalizing of the inner life of the Church has resulted in a renewed emphasis on personal witnessing and successful evangelism. The Madras Conference stated that "where, in recent years, evangelism has been most successful it has been due, not so much to the direct preaching or planning of missionaries, as to the witness, chiefly voluntary witness, of the younger churches. This witness has sprung from a spiritual vitality and experience which compels men to pass on the good news they have found."[19]

The principles discussed in this chapter are of vital significance for the Church in China. The prolonged war has taken a terrific toll of life and property. Church groups have been scattered, and many are now without pastors. Any semblance of an organized church program has been carried on with tremendous difficulty. The situation calls for faith and fortitude. The post-war years will demand clear thinking and wise planning. Fundamental in all plans, however, will

be the necessity of continually emphasizing the supreme importance of keeping the inner life of the Church strong. If the Church's spiritual vitality is kept at a high level success can be expected in evangelism and in all phases of the life and work of the Church. Therefore Christian leaders in China must cultivate their own spiritual lives and make every possible effort to provide the means for strengthening the inner life of the whole Church.

1 Madras Series, Vol. V, The Economic Basis of the Church, p. 519.

CHAPTER V

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND THE INNER LIFE OF THE CHURCH

The early Christian missionaries in China gave very little specific attention to the economic environment of the country in which they were endeavoring to implant Christianity. In their minds the chief work of the Christian evangel was to get men converted. The economic surroundings of the converts were of no particular importance to the Church. At least, it was felt that the improvement of the environment was not the responsibility of the Christian community, and the connection of the environment and spiritual life was not fully realized. An indication of this attitude is seen in the published reports of the otherwise significant missionary conferences held at Shanghai in 1877, 1890, and 1907 respectively. Not one of these conferences dealt specifically with economic conditions facing the Christians of the times. Such a situation was in keeping with the observation that "evangelism, education and medical work are three dimensions in which the missionary movement was conceived. The economic and social environment of the Church forms a fourth dimension whose importance has only slowly been recognized."[1]

In contrast to the conferences mentioned, the Madras meeting centered a great deal of attention on social and economic questions. The Economic Basis of the Church, volume

2 William Paton, "The Meeting of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram, Madras", The International Review of Missions, April, 1939, p. 169.

3 Madras Series, Vol. V, Op. Cit., p. 13.

V of the Madras Series, is the largest of the seven volumes in the series. It contains a total of 596 pages. This is significant because it shows the trend in the thinking of many Church leaders today. William Paton, writing in April, 1939, expressed the view that one of the points by which the Tambaram meeting would come to be known was the recognition it gave to "the great importance of the economic side of the life of the growing Church".[2] So the pronouncements of Madras are of special value for the Church in China.

Pressing Problems of China's Economic Environment

Along with all other Asiatic lands China is faced with very serious problems in her economic environment. It will be impossible to discuss them fully here, but we shall point out four that are particularly pressing.

The first of these problems is tenancy. Of the total Chinese population from 80 to 90 per cent live under rural conditions. Approximately 300,000,000 people "live in villages of less than 2500 population. The average size of farms per household in North China is in the neighborhood of 5 acres, dry cultivation; in South China where wet lands prevail it is about 2½ acres."[3] About one-fourth of the farmers working these lands are tenants. Their lot is extremely difficult. Moreover, in most cases tenancy lasts a lifetime. "The tenant is rarely able to buy his land;

4 Loc. Cit.

5 Ibid., p. 61.

6 R. A. Felton, "The Rural Church in the Far East", p. 8.

7 A. B. Lewis, "Economic Conditions in Rural China", China Christian Year Book, 1934-35, pp. 59,60.

8 Madras Series, Vol. V. Op. Cit., p. 61.

at best, his savings are meager and credit facilities at reasonable rates are usually non-existent."[4] The cash earnings of tenants are few and their standard of living is very low.

Another economic problem is that of debt. This is very common. In fact, "debt seems to be accepted as the normal lot of a very large proportion of the rural classes of Asia."[5] Professor R. A. Felton in picturing the economic situation states:

> The financial condition of the people of China is best described by the phrase 'marginal farmers'. When a crop is poor or fails the family suddenly falls below the subsistence level. Only one farmer out of five has any savings. Transport for bringing in food stuffs is poor. The cost of hauling freight on the railway is $2.19 (U.S. currency) per ton-mile as compared to 84 cents in the United States or 77 cents in Japan. 39 per cent of the farmers are in debt and the average rate of interest is 38 per cent per year.[6]

Mr. A. B. Lewis, writing in the China Christian Year Book for 1934-35, gives an even higher percentage of indebtedness. He states that in "December 1933, 56 per cent of the farmers were reported to be in debt for cash. The annual rate of interest averaged 34 percent."[7] In many cases this indebtedness is a great burden. In certain districts of Central Szechuan "the produce of farms has been mortgaged to money-lenders for forty years in advance."[8] This example is extreme, but it shows the bondage of debt.

Crop failures, insect pests, floods and droughts are causes of debt in China, but one of the chief sources is

9 Felton, Op. Cit., p. 8.

10 Madras Series, Vol. V, Op. Cit., p. 59.

11 Herman C. E. Liu, "Government Education", China Christian Year Book, 1934-35, p.236.

12 T. H. P. Sailer, Christian Adult Education in Rural Asia and Africa, p. 88.

the extravagant expenditure in the observance of special family celebrations. "The expense for these events in every case is out of all proportion to the family income and is due to the large place that family loyalty plays in the life of the people in China."[9] For example in some parts of the country, "the average cost of a wedding, funeral or dowry is more than the earnings of a day laborer for a whole year, and the combined income of an entire farm family for four months is needed to pay for a wedding."[10] It is not surprising that such lavish expenditures as these put many families under a heavy load of debt.

A third difficulty in the economic environment is illiteracy. In 1935, Dr. Herman C. E. Liu, at that time president of the University of Shanghai, stated, "Illiteracy is regarded as the worst problem now facing China. About eighty per cent of the people cannot read or write. The Government is determined to eradicate this condition as soon as possible."[11] Strictly speaking illiteracy is not an economic problem, but much of it stems from poverty and a low economic standard. As one writer states:

> Poverty... is closely connected with other handicaps. There is a connection with illiteracy: schools are likely to be poor in quality or altogether lacking; homes provide so little stimulus, since the majority of parents are illiterate; children are needed to help in family tasks. Illiteracy in turn makes the escape from poverty more difficult.[12]

Fortunately active steps are being taken in China to alleviate this great handicap of illiteracy. Both the

13 Madras Series, Vol. V. Op. Cit., p. 87.

14 Felton, Op. Cit., p. 197.

Government and the Church have inaugurated helpful measures for teaching the people to read and write. One of the outstanding pioneers in the field has been Y.C. James Yen. He has been the head of the National Mass Education Movement. Reports of the Movement, "which has been successful in teaching several million Chinese illiterates to read and write a selected list of one thousand of the most frequently used characters, state that a source of its success is that the Chinese peasant has begun to understand that illiteracy is a handicap to his prosperity."[13]

A fourth problem to be mentioned is the state of ill-health and low vitality which is prevalent among many. This condition greatly lowers the earning power of not a few people and contributes to the general economic situation. Health hazards are great in China. In many areas sanitation facilities are entirely inadequate. In a large part of the country, "the drinking water is taken from the ponds or canals that are used for irrigating the fields. In these same ponds the vegetables and dishes are washed; the weekly laundry is done and the animals come to drink....This germ-laden drinking water is a health hazard to be reckoned with at all times."[14]

To overcome this and other health hazards many Chinese Christians have adopted a "Health Standard for the Christian Home" and seek to observe the following:

1. Sweeping in and around the house daily.
2. Drinking only water that has been boiled.

15 Ibid., p. 201.

16 Madras Series, Vol. V, Op. Cit., p. 104.

3. All food to be served hot or kept covered from flies.
4. Dishes washed in water that has been boiled.
5. Special chop sticks for serving.
6. A separate wash basin and towel for each member of the family (especially those having trachoma).
7. A fly swatter, a fly trap, and a fly-proof cupboard for food.
8. Disposal of garbage by burying or burning.
9. An outdoor family toilet that is covered to keep out the flies.
10. Whitewashing the inside of the walls of the house once a year.
11. Adequate windows and skylight in each room.
12. A chimney for the cooking stove.
13. A mosquito net for each bed and window and door screens.[15]

Relationship of Economic Environment to the Church's Inner Life

In keeping with the subject of our study, the question may well be asked, What is the connection of the problems just discussed and the Church's spiritual life ?. In the judgment of this writer they have a close connection. The relation becomes noticeable even at the time of conversion. As was pointed out at Madras, "When a man enters the relationship of sonship with the Father God, and experiences the saving power of Christ, he cannot but be dissatisfied with his environment. He has an inner compulsion to cleanse and better his surroundings and make them conformable to God's will and to the dignity of the relationship he has entered."[16] At the same time factors in the economic surroundings may easily thwart the new life that has been kindled. A growing Christian experience will be dependent

17 Ibid., p. 131.

18 Ibid., pp. 13,14.

on spiritual and physical conditions, and attention must be given to both. The "limitations which the social and economic environment place upon the effectiveness and permanence of the individual convert's experience of the redemptive power of Christ have only in recent years begun to be widely recognized."[17]

Unquestionably economic conditions affect not only the individual convert but also the entire Church's inner life and growth. Take the matter of tenancy for example. One authority states:

> This tenancy situation has an important bearing upon the development of new social institutions, such as the Christian Church, which are not a part of the natural social order of the area. The wealthy owners of land, loyal to their own institutions, the clans developed about ancestor worship, the families loyal to their own group,... and the demand for land upon the part of the peasants to insure a livelihood, make it almost impossible for farm tenants to attach themselves to social organizations to which these powerful groups are antagonistic. Economic pressure makes the peasant afraid to break from his moorings. As a consequence the progress of the Church is impeded.[18]

Extreme poverty and a heavy load of debt can not help but have a depressing effect on the spiritual life. Christians who can not read are greatly handicapped in the development of their inner lives. They are denied the constant use of the Scriptures and other devotional material for inspiration and guidance. It is almost impossible for them to reach the high plane of spiritual living that would be their privilege otherwise. Continued ill-health and low physical vitality among large groups, likewise, may hinder

the growth of the Church. Perhaps this handicap may be more easily overcome than some of the other problems mentioned, but it is serious none-the-less.

Thus far in our discussion on the economic environment the question of the foreign missionary and mission funds has not been mentioned. However, the foreign worker and his money are closely connected with the spiritual life of the Church in China. Normally the missionary from the West has gone to China with financial resources far above those of most Chinese. Almost without exception he has been looked upon as a wealthy person. "To the average national the missionary appeared not so much as the exponent of a new religion or way of life as a possible source of personal economic improvement."[19]

This situation has created serious problems many times. Frequently money matters have taken up almost the entire energy of the missionary and it has been easy to neglect his own spiritual life and consequently he has not been influential in strengthening the inner lives of those around him. Often, moreover, "the role of the missionary as employer and dispenser of funds has created an unhealthy dependence with a consequent weakening of morale on the part of many workers in mission employ."[20] The foreign worker who distributes large sums of money, even though they be for the work of the Church, can very easily come to think of himself as a manager of men and material affairs. So

21 Ibid., p. 35.

22 Ibid., p. 39.

"there is a perpetual conflict for supremacy between the spiritual and economic forces in the life of the missionary, and the consequent secularism of the missionary influence in the community."[21]

Most of the mission societies working in China have had a policy of giving considerable financial assistance to the native Church, and money has played a big role in the development of mission projects. Generally speaking, funds have been wisely used, and have contributed to the growth and development of the Church. However, the storm of depression, breaking out in 1930, caused a tremendous reduction in the amount of money available for mission subsidies in China and all other mission fields. This drastic curtailment has had a profound effect on the younger churches and shows the close relationship of finance and church life. "Where cuts have been applied suddenly and without warning, or without providing for a period of adjustment, there has been lowering of morale and a shrinkage in the efficiency of the Church. In other cases churches have risen to the emergency with a new result of increased spiritual vitality..."[22]

In China a report on the effect of subsidy reduction on the life of the Church brought to light some interesting statements. The study was made among a number of missions. Ten said that financial difficulties "had enhanced the spiritual life and vitality of the church. Five others

23 Ibid., p. 302.

24 International Missionary Council, The World Mission of the Church, p. 98.

stated that no apparent decrease in spirituality had resulted. Three missions spoke of the increased life that had come to the churches where they had taken over all responsibility. The churches of three missions had a loss in spiritual power from subsidy reduction."[23]

Financial Support of the Church

Perhaps enough has been said to show that the economic environment is closely related to the inner life of the Church and that very often difficult economic circumstances hinder spiritual growth. The conditions thus far discussed have dealt particularly with problems outside the Church itself. Within the Church, too, however, there is a close relationship between the spiritual life and support of the Church.

The Madras Conference was strong in its emphasis on the necessity of having spiritual foundations for an adequate financial program. The financial support of the Church, the Conference urged

> must be rooted in its spiritual life. The use of the Church's gifts must make for spiritual growth, otherwise giving proves unfruitful. Through his gifts the worshipper expresses his growing inner life, his gratitude to God, and reaches out to the entire brotherhood of Christians and to those outside. Sacrificial giving is one of the essential elements in promoting true spiritual growth.[24]

Furthermore, Madras recommended "that the economic life of the Church be put in its proper setting as essentially a spiritual problem, and that scriptural principles of giving

25 Ibid., pp. 102,103.

26 Ibid., pp. 101, 102.

27 Herbert E. Blair, Stewardship in Korea, p. 18.

be systematically taught and emphasized."[25]

In the effort to overcome the stringent financial conditions of most Christians in China and other lands many methods have been used for increasing church support. The Madras report lists eight:

1. Co-operatives and Christian guilds.
2. The Lord's acre plan by which the proceeds of a part of one's property--land, trees or livestock is dedicated to the Lord.
3. Church farms where members contribute in labor.
4. Small home industries from the proceeds of which church gifts are made.
5. The rural community parish in which a church identifies itself with many aspects of the economic and social as well as the spiritual life of its community.
6. The every member canvass, the systematizing of the benevolences of a church,...
7. The Christian tithe.
8. The adaptation and use by the church of indigenous ways of giving--such as special thank-offerings, first-fruits and the honoring of family and community festivals,...[26]

All of these have been used with varying degrees of success, but we would particularly emphasize the matter of Christian stewardship and systematic giving. We believe a more widespread recognition of the importance of Bible teaching on these matters would greatly benefit the Church in China. "A strong stewardship campaign has the elements of revival in it. Stewardship promotion should enhance spiritual life and undergird Christian life for proper self-support."[27]

Operation of the stewardship principle has been especially successful in Korea. For many years there has

28 Madras Series, Vol. V, Op. Cit., p. 381.

been wise emphasis upon stewardship and systematic giving in the Korean Church, and it has reached a high level of financial independence. Perhaps the chief reason for success has been the attention given to sound Bible study. Indeed, the "Church of Korea...gives proof that a Bible-trained and inspired church is a church of sacrificial and beautiful giving. It is not a coincidence that the Korean Church, all of whose members have been taught the Scriptures for more than a generation, should lead the churches of Eastern Asia in financial strength."[28]

This example from Korea is related to the situation in China because the two countries have so many similarities, particularly from a financial standpoint. The average church members of both countries are very poor and in many cases live under like circumstances. Their cultural backgrounds are somewhat the same also. Hence, methods that have been successful in Korea might well be useful in China likewise.

Thus, in the days to come Christian leaders in China need to be more fully aware of the close relationship of the economic environment and the Church's spiritual life. Wherever possible efforts should be made to improve the economic surroundings. Within the Church itself spiritual principles must be kept uppermost in all financial matters and enlarged teaching on Christian stewardship can be an important factor in increased church support.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY TO THE CHURCH'S SPIRITUAL LIFE

The conference at Madras gave less attention to the specific work of the foreign missionary than it did to many other questions. In fact, a few delegates criticized the meeting at this point. Perhaps, however, there is ground for gratitude rather than criticism. As stated in the first chapter, more than half of the delegates were from the younger churches, whereas in earlier conferences of a similar nature the missionary delegates were in the majority. The strength and importance of the delegates from the younger churches at Madras show that the Church in their native lands has been growing and developing leaders.

It does not follow, however, that the foreign missionary has made his contribution only in the past and that there is now no need for his services. Quite the opposite is true. In particular, the right kind of missionary can make a very vital contribution to the spiritual life of the Church in China as well as in many other lands.

From the time of Robert Morrison to the present, missionaries have been received in China with varying attitudes. During certain periods the hostility of the general populace has been marked. At other times, the foreign workers have been welcomed by both Christians and non-believers. Regardless of these conditions, thousands

1 Chester Holcombe, The Real Chinese Question, pp. 173,174.

2 Madras Series, Vol. IV, The Life of the Church, p. 265.

3 Loc. Cit.

of devoted missionaries have given unselfish service to the country. An American statesman, after residing in China for many years wrote, "In the face of all criticism, friendly and hostile, and after making full and ample discount for inefficiency, unfitness, and indiscretion, each in individual cases, it still must be insisted that missionaries constitute the most important force working for progress, development, and conservation to be found in China."[1]

Need for the Missionary's Contribution

The Christian Church is well established in China, but foreign missionaries are still greatly needed. They can give valuable assistance to many phases of the Church's activities, but they can be especially helpful in strengthening the inner life of the Church. Rev. T. C. Bau, a Chinese delegate at Madras, strongly emphasized the need for missionaries in his native land. In discussing the function and need of foreign workers, Dr. Bau remarked, "For weak churches, training of leaders, pastors and lay workers and also deepening of the spiritual life of the Christians in general is what is required from missionaries."[2] Furthermore, he continued, "In pioneer work in the interior regions of China, missionary help is greatly needed. During the last ten years missionary forces in China have been reduced to half through poor health, old age and so forth. The loss to the work has been heavy."[3]

4 James H. Franklin, The Christian Crisis in China, p. 61.

5 J. Campbell Gibson, Mission Problems and Mission Methods in South China, p. 327.

The attitude of Dr. Bau is typical of national leaders of the Church in China. Almost without exception they feel foreign co-workers are needed for strengthening the life of the Church.

Dr. James H. Franklin, former Secretary of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, after an extended tour of China wrote: "The missionary whose life and words will help to quicken the spiritual power and aspiration of the churches is greatly needed. There is no use in talking about programs without spiritual energy."[4] To say that the missionary is needed to quicken the vitality of spiritual life is not to intimate that Chinese Christians are less spiritually minded than missionaries. On the contrary, not a few Chinese followers of Christ have overshadowed the average missionary in devotion and consecration. However, most messengers from the older churches have had ample opportunities for Bible study and religious development, whereas similar privileges for the majority of Chinese Christians have been few.

As one writer stated, "There is much help that the foreign missionary can render out of his experience of the more advanced Christian life of the West, the fuller training which he has enjoyed, and the better appliances within his reach for the minute study of Scripture and its application to the varied problems of the Christian life."[5] This sharing of experience on the part of the missionary must not

6 W.Y. Chen, "Christians in Post-war China", p.3.

be in a spirit of condescension. Unfortunately that kind of spirit has been manifested by some workers, and their influence has thereby been limited.

All that has just been stated about the need for missionary help will be greatly intensified after the current war in China comes to a close. Nearly eight years of terrible conflict have caused untold suffering and want. The loss of life and property among all classes has been staggering. The Church has suffered severely. The faith of all Christians has been severely tried. In the years to follow much help will be needed from other lands.

Some of this will be of a material nature. Thousands of homes must be rebuilt. There will be need for constructing hundreds of churches. Foreign money will be required in the gigantic program. American engineers can be of assistance. But the need for help in rebuilding spiritual foundations will be even greater than the call for material aid. The youth, especially, are seeking something to give them support. In a recent paper on "Christians in Post-war China", Bishop W.Y. Chen, of the Methodist Church, said, "In the face of wanton destruction of life and property many young people are driven into themselves. They are groping in the dark for something which is undestructible, permanent and lasting. They want a spiritual dynamic, a a supernatural help that comes from above."[6]

In an address on post-war problems, Bishop Chen

7 W. Y. Chen, in an address given at Berkeley, California, Sept. 25, 1944.

8 Acts 1:8 (Moffatt).

also stated that missionaries will be needed for spiritual uplift more than for any other purpose.[7] Thus, the need for missionaries in China is very clear and the opportunities for spiritual service are many.

Contribution of the Missionary

Having pointed out the need for the missionary, we may now consider more fully the nature of his spiritual contribution. Primarily the missionary is a witness of Christian truth. In His last recorded words Jesus promised: "You will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses at Jerusalem, throughout all Judaea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."[8] From the time these words were spoken to the present, true followers of Christ have tried to be witnesses to Him. Basically the missionary movement has been one of witness. Through the witness of the missionaries the Church was founded in China. The spiritual lives of the early Christians in the land were nurtured by the testimonies of those who had come to share the Christian Gospel.

At the great missionary conference held in Shanghai, 1877, the Rev. D. L. Mackenzie read a paper on elevating the moral and spiritual tone of the Native Church. One of his statements was this:

> Many of the members of the Native Church may be slow to take in our teaching, and through dullness of

9 Records of the Missionary Conference, Shanghai, 1877, p. 267.

10 Madras Series, Vol. IV, Op. Cit., p. 267.

> perception and lack of spiritual insight, lose much of what we would fain impart to them in our stated meetings for instruction in the word of God. But we may depend on it that if we ourselves walk with God, if the life of Jesus is made manifest in our daily life, if we each one of us can with good conscience say to them, 'Be ye followers of me even as I am also of Christ,' then we are using a mighty, a most effectual means for raising their moral and spiritual tone.[9]

This early missionary recognized the importance of witnessing daily to Christian truth.

The modern missionary may also make a valuable contribution to the Church's spiritual life through witnessing. The Rev. D. T. Niles, a delegate at the Madras Conference, in outlining the work of the missionary gave witnessing as one of his important functions. "The missionary", he stated, "should not think of setting a norm for the nationals but should make it his task to bear witness."[10] This witness to Christ and Christian truth must be not by word of mouth only. In fact, stronger testimony may at times be given through sacrificial service. The important thing is for the missionary to be so imbued with the spirit of Christ that in all relationships and in all activities he may give valid testimony to the inner meaning of Christianity. In this manner his example will be a strong force for strengthening the spiritual life of the Church.

In the days that are past many missionaries occupied positions of active leadership in the Chinese Church. More and more, however, nationals have rightfully assumed these places, and now the missionary can make his best contribution

11 Ibid., p. 237.

as a friendly co-worker in the Church. In some cases he may still need to take the initiative, but he should be a leader largely behind the scenes rather than in the forefront.

The missionary may serve in various ways, and each must discover how he can make his best contribution. Madras suggested that Bible teaching was an important means of enriching the spiritual life of the Church.[11] Every missionary, regardless of his special field, should be able to lead Bible classes. The Chinese, both within and without the Church, have given evidence of a growing hunger for the message of the Bible. But the number of Chinese Christian leaders who are adequately prepared to teach the Scriptures is few. Here is a great opportunity for the properly trained missionary to make a lasting contribution to the Church.

The matter of evangelism has already been discussed, but here again the missionary can be of real service. Few missionaries gain a sufficiently good knowledge of the language and culture of the people to be able to preach in Chinese as well as trained native evangelists. But if the missionary has a vital spirit of evangelism he may be an effective force in helping to work out the program of church extension. The foreign worker may be particularly helpful in suggesting new lines of approach and new methods in evangelism. He may broaden the scope of evangelism and seek to make the influence of the Church felt more widely.

All of these activities, must, of course, be carried on in a spirit of comradeship with the Chinese Christians. The exchange of ideas and experiences should be mutually beneficial.

Perhaps the missionary can make one of his greatest contributions to the spiritual life of the Church by helping to train leaders. Excellent Christian leaders have been developed in China, but they are far too few for the tremendous opportunities that are open to the Church at the present time. Facilities for training ministers and other leaders have been entirely inadequate. Destruction of personnel and property during the war has made the situation even more acute. So there is an urgent call for missionaries to give all assistance possible in helping to solve this problem. Some missionaries are needed as teachers in seminaries and similar training schools. Others can assist by helping to keep the challenge of Christian service before the youth of the Church.

In all phases of the Church's life and work there is a place for the missionary. Not all foreign workers will make the same contribution, but if each person works as a colleague and friendly helper with the Chinese associates the inner life of the Church will be strengthened.

Qualifications Necessary for Making Adequate Spiritual Contribution

To make an adequate contribution to the spiritual

12 James H. Franklin, The Christian Crisis in China, pp. 75,76.

life of the Church certain qualifications are necessary for the missionary. Far too many workers have failed on the foreign field because they lacked the necessary prerequisites for success. The fundamental qualification of a Christian missionary is a rich personal religious experience.

Good health, a congenial personality and sound intellectual training are highly important, but a missionary may have these and yet be inadequately equipped for real Christian service. A missionary secretary of experience stated, "More and more we are persuaded that the most necessary qualification for missionary service is a personal experience in Christ."[12] This experience need not be of a particular type or form, but unless the individual knows Christ in a real and personal way, he will be unable to give worthwhile spiritual help to those in need of it.

J. Hudson Taylor was one of the most successful missionaries that ever worked in China. He was a man of deep faith and unusual piety. In an essay dealing with qualifications of missionaries he made some strong statements in regard to their spiritual experience. Among other things he said:

> To be successful, missionaries must be holy men, loving the Word, feeding and feasting on it, having it dwelling in them richly; must be men of prayer, who have often proved for themselves its power. Men who wish to live for eternity, and are resolved to do so; men under 'the powers of the world to come', to whom unseen things are most real and most satisfying. They must be men who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts,--not merely men who love God, or who know that He loves them;

13 J. Hudson Taylor, "The Missionary: His Qualifications, Introduction to His Work, and Mode of Life," Records of the Missionary Conference, Shanghai, 1890, p. 150.

14 Madras Series, Vol. IV, Op. Cit., p. 271.

15 Ibid., p. 272.

> but who have the very love of God for perishing souls shed abroad in their hearts, and who hence can do in their measure what Christ did in His, and by the same power.[13]

Though written more than one hundred fifty years ago these words have significance for today. In fact, Principal Hla Bu, of Judson College, speaking at the Tambaram meeting, expressed the same idea. This delegate said of the missionary: "He should have a deep and vital personal experience of Jesus Christ, an utter devotion to Him and an overwhelming desire to share his joyous experience with others. He should have an unshakable conviction that what Christ has done for him He can do for all the world."[14] Persons with this sort of faith and experience are needed to meet the new day of challenge and opportunity in China.

Personal religious experience is primary, but it is important also for the missionary to have a clear understanding of the basic beliefs of Christianity. The "missionary of the present day must possess a firm grasp of the fundamentals of his faith which he holds intransigently in the face of movements in the modern world hostile to the Christian faith and the changes that have taken place in non-Christian religions."[15] A working knowledge of church history will be helpful in this regard. The successful missionary--the one making a helpful spiritual contribution to the Church--will know the reason for his faith and will seek continually to understand it more perfectly. A speaker

16 Ibid., p. 262.

17 Franklin, Op. Cit., p. 79.

at Madras "emphasized the great importance of the missionary having a clear and firm grasp of the truth of the Christian message before attempting to preach it."[16]

Two virtues greatly needed by the missionary are a spirit of humility and a willingness to learn from his co-workers. It is easy for people of the white race from the West to have an attitude of superiority. The Chinese are quick to realize such an attitude. The Christian from the West must avoid this feeling in every way possible. As one leader pointed out, "It cannot be said too strongly that a missionary must enjoy a capacity for a fellowship with the Chinese that is free from any sense of condenscension if he is able to pour his life into those in whom Christ is being formed."[17] Even though the missionary has usually had more opportunities for study and training than his Chinese co-worker, the former must have a willingness to learn from the latter. At best the foreigner will make mistakes and often is likely to misunderstand the intricate forms of Chinese etiquette, but a desire to learn will help the missionary overcome these difficulties.

Peter Y. F. Shih, an outstanding Chinese Christian leader, after enumerating a number of necessary qualifications for a missionary candidate said, "But above all, the candidate must have a heart to understand people. The ability to live and to be friendly to all people and to serve them with

18 Peter Y. F. Shirh, "More Power for Missions", The Chinese Recorder, May 1938, p. 243.

19 Loc. Cit.

loyalty, devotion, and with infinite patience, sometimes in spite of ingratitude, misunderstanding and discouragement, is absolutely essential."[18] Furthermore, "The missionary must be one who has the power of drawing from the wanderer and the stranger the response of life, and one through whom the love and sympathy of the great heart of God flow forth unto all sorts and conditions of men."[19]

Thus, a high spiritual standard is held up for the missionary, and perhaps few Christians feel they can qualify. None can successfully meet the conditions in their own strength, but with dependence upon God and earnest effort primary prerequisites can be met. Then the consecrated missionary can make a very valuable contribution to the spiritual life of the Church in China.

CONCLUSION

The Madras Conference considered topics other than that studied in this thesis, but none was of greater significance for the Church in China. Our investigation reveals that the Tambaram meeting made very helpful suggestions for strengthening the inner life of the Church through worship, the Christian home, religious education, and Christian literature. All of these are important for the Church in China.

The emphasis of Madras on evangelism was noteworthy also. As revealed by this study, the relationship between evangelism and the spiritual life of the Church is very close. A vital spirit of evangelism increases spirituality, and a vibrant inner life is necessary for successful evangelism. Madras was significant at this point.

The Conference was particularly outstanding, furthermore, in its recognition of the importance of the economic and social environment. No other world missionary conference has so fully realized the close relationship of the environment and the inner life of the Church. The lead of Madras in this area is of no little significance for the Chinese Church.

Finally, in our study we have found that the delegates at Tambaram gave attention to the place and importance of the missionary in the world-wide activities of the Church.

They emphasized particularly that in the future the foreign missionary must be a spiritual colleague and friendly helper in the work of the Church. In most cases he will not be the controlling leader as he has often been in the past. Furthermore, this investigation shows that missionaries are greatly needed in China, and those with the type of qualifications that were suggested at Madras can make a very valuable and lasting contribution to the spiritual life of the Church in that land.

Thus, the Madras Conference dealt significantly with questions that are vitally related to the inner life of the Church in China. The meeting provided inspiration and quidance to many leaders in the Chinese Church, and in the years ahead they will be turning again and again to the pronouncements of Madras for further encouragement and counsel.

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